

**ABSTRACT**

A method, mechanism, and computer program product for storing, accessing, and managing XML data is disclosed. The approach supports efficient evaluation of XPath queries and also improves the performance of data/fragment extraction. The approach can  
5 be applied to schema-less documents. The approach is applicable to all database systems and other servers which support storing and managing XML content. In addition, the approach can be applied to store, manage, and retrieve other types of unstructured or semi-structured data in a database system.